

REMARKS

Receipt of the Office Action of December 2, 2010 is gratefully acknowledged.

Claims 18 - 34 have been reconsidered and finally rejected as follows: claims 18 - 20, 22, 23 and 33 under 35 USC 103(a) over Langels et al in view of Heidepriem; claim 21 under 35 USC 103(a) over Langels et al in view of Heidepriem and Larson; claims 24 0 32 under 35 USC 103(a) over Langels et al in view of Heidepriem and Cook et al; and claim 34 under 35 USC 103(a) over Langels et al in view of Heidepriem, Cook et al and Van Der Pol.

These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claim 18 has been amended to correspond to the version of claim 18 now allowed in the corresponding European prosecution. The additions are all supported by the specification and the drawing of the application.

The order of the steps of claim 18 have been changed. First, an additional communication connection between the two communication connections has to be provided to allow the transmission of digital signals between the two measurement transmitters over the additional communication connection.

It should be noted that by the present invention, especially as now defined in claim 18, there is no need for a second or even a third I/O unit as suggested by Langels et al of Heidepriem. According to the present invention, the transmission of digital signals between the two measurement transmitters and the control system can be accomplished by the additional communication connection that is arranged between the two communication connections of the two Measurement devices, thereby not requiring an additional I/O unit.

Heidepriem does not disclose that an additional communication connection between the first and the second of the two communication connections is used. On

the contrary, Heidepriem discloses "That the illustrated unit C has three physical communication interfaces" (paragraph [0027]). The other illustrated units, i.e., A,B,D etc. in Fig. 3 of Heidepriem also have three communication units, only thereby allowing communication over different communication npaths. Heidepriem therefore does not disclose that an additional communication connection is provided between the two communication connections as is recited in claim 18.

By combining the teachings of Langels et al and Heidepriem the result would be providing an additional communication connection between the measurement devices themselves and not between the communication lines connecting the two measurement devices with the control system.

The basic combination of Langels et al and Heidepriem fails to meet the recited steps of claim 18. A similar conclusion is reached when considering the other references added to the noted basic combination. It is clear, therefore, that claim 18, as now amended, is allowable over the art of record, as combined in the noted final rejections.

In view of the clear patentable distinction of the present invention as defined in claims 18 - 34, it is respectfully submitted, that the above amendment to claim 18 be entered and claims 18 - 34 now allowed. Alternatively, it is respectfully requested that the above amendment to claim 18 be entered for purposes of appeal.

Respectfully submitted,
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